

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5253

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

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AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 29944

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CG AO US

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF ZAIRIAN OPPOSITION FIGURE ON ANGOLA

REF: MELONE/STRAND LETTER OF MARCH 29, 2975 (NOTAL)

1. EMBOFF MET WITH SELF-STYLED ZAIRIAN OPPOSITION LEADER MOSHELENGE NOVEMBER 17 AT LATTER'S REQUEST. MOSHELENGE DESCRIBES HIMSELF AS A CHRISTIAN AND AS A NATIVE OF KISANGANI WHO HAS LIVED IN EXILE, PRIMARILY IN EASTERN EUROPE, FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS. HE SAYS HE IS A FORMER ASSOCIATE OF ANTOINE GIZENGA, "WHO HAS BEEN EXPELLED FROM OUR PARTY," AND PROFESSES TO HAVE BECOME DISENCHANTED WITH MARXISM AFTER HIS EAST EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE. HE REVILES MOBUTU FOR HIS OBSCURANTIST AUTHENTICITY CAMPAIGN WHICH IS "RETURNING ZAIRE TO MIDDLE AGES" AND FOR HIS FAILURE TO USE GENEROUS FOREIGN (READ U.S.) AID FOR OTHER THAN HIS PERSONAL BENEFIT. HE DESCRIBES THE OPPOSITION TO MOBUTU WITHIN ZAIRE AS WIDESPREAD AND CLAIMS THAT AN UPRISING IS IMMINENT AS INCREASING NUMBERS OF ZAIROIS DESPAIR OF COUNTRY'S FUTURE UNDER SUCH A
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LEADER.

2. ACCORDING TO MOSHELENCE, THE SUPPORT OF ZAIRIANS IN ANGOLA FOR THE MPLA IS BASED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THEIR DESIRE TO OVERTHROW MOBUTU, THROUGH A NETO VICTORY, AT ALL COSTS. THUS, HE CONTINUED, SUCH DIVERSE ELEMENTS AS KATANGAN GENDARMES AND LEFTIST RADICALS FIND A COMMON HOPE IN SUPPORTING NETO, WITH WHOSE PHILOSOPHY THEY DO NOT NECESSARILY AGREE. (MOSHELENCE CLAIMS NETO IS NOT REALLY A COMMUNIST, BUT WILLING TO TAKE WHATEVER HELP HE CAN. HE ALSO SAID ACCEPTING BLATANT SOVIET ASSISTANCE WAS AN ERROR.) MOSHELENCE SHOWED EMBOFF PHOTOS OF HIMSELF WITH NETO AND WHAT APPEARED TO BE KATANGANS, ALL IN UNIFORM, PURPORTEDLY TAKEN EARLY THIS MONTH.

3. MOSHELENCE'S MESSAGE SEEMED TO BE THAT IF THE US WOULD BE LESS HELPFUL TO MOBUTU, ZAIRIAN OPPOSITION SUPPORT FOR NETO WOULD DECREASE AND A COMPROMISE AMONG THE THREE ANGOLAN MOVEMENTS WOULD THEREBY BECOME MORE LIKELY. HE INTIMATED THAT HE AND HIS FRIENDS (WHOM HE REFUSED TO DESCRIBE) WERE CONSIDERING ADVISING NETO TO SEEK A SETTLEMENT WITH ROBERTO AND SAVIMBI AND THAT NETO MIGHT BE PREPARED TO STEP DOWN AS HEAD OF THE MPLA IF THAT WOULD FACILITATE A SOLUTION. SOMEWHAT INCONSISTENTLY, HE ALSO AFFIRMED THAT CONTINUED FIGHTING IN ANGOLA WOULD SPREAD TO ZAIRE AND HELP TOPPLE MOBUTU.

4. COMMENT: WE KNOW LITTLE ABOUT MOSHELENCE, OTHER THAN THAT HE IS INTELLIGENT AND HATES MOBUTU. HIS APPROACH AT A MOMENT WHEN MPLA FORTUNES ARE FALLING MAY HAVE BEEN DESIGNED PARTLY TO TEST OUR VIEWS ON A RECONCILIATION AMONG THE THREE ANGOLAN GROUPS. (EMBOFF SAID THE US HOPES ANGOLANS CAN ESTABLISH A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY ALONG LINES SUGGESTED BY THE OAU.) THE ZAIRIAN OPPOSITION MAY BE WORRIED THAT IT IS BACKING THE WRONG HORSE IN ANGOLA, AND THAT BY SUGGESTING IT MIGHT BE READY TO ENCOURAGE NETO TO COMPROMISE, IT CAN PERSUADE THE US TO REDUCE ITS AID TO MOBUTU. IN OTHER WORDS, WE SHALL HELP WITH YOUR ANGOLAN PROBLEM IF YOU HELP WITH OURS IN ZAIRE.

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